

Adventures in Babysitting by PoorSapAdvocate

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Summary: The Party decides that the best way for Will to fight his demons is to literally fight demons. Steve is somehow stuck babysitting. Also known as: Just give Steve Harrington his girlfriend and his boyfriend and his babysitting job already. Written before season 3, reuploaded and edited.

Adventures in Babysitting

Chapter 1: Carrion Crawlers

It starts, like most things in Hawkins, with Will Byers.

Joyce had been keeping a close eye on him since the events of last fall, even closer after the events of *this* fall, but she could only do so much. She and Jonathan had to take up extra hours at work to help cover the cost of repairing everything.

"It won't be much." Joyce told him. "Just pick him up and stay with him for a few hours until we can come home. He's a good kid. Most of the time he stays at the Byers, anyway; you won't even have to stay with him all the time."

"He blames himself," Jonathan said, much later, at school when Joyce was not around to hear them. For Bob's death, he did not add. "He can take care of himself, and we know that, but...he needs someone. Someone that'll treat him like he won't vanish the next second. Or like he's dangerous."

"And why do you think I'm the one to do it?" He asked.

"They all look up to you. Dustin told him about what happened..."

In the tunnels with the demon dogs (Demodogs. Whatever.), he does not add.

But he needed the money. Or, at least, he needed the money if he ever wants to get away from this shithole. He never really questioned why the Byers are willing to spend money on a babysitter when the whole reason they need one is get more money. He figured asking will end with him realizing that it's not about the money to him, not really.

So Steve was there to pick up Will at school the next day.

"So what do kids like? Chess?"

Will made a face, something like he wanted to laugh but could not

tell if Steve was serious.

"Mike's house. We're planning a huge campaign for the next weekend." Will said. "We can roll you up a character?"

"Sounds like nerd shit." Steve said.

It is nerd shit. He was stuck in the basement of his ex-girlfriend's house as a bunch of little shits talk hard math and monsters.

He did notice that Will, though just as loud as the rest of them about everything else, shrank back as they mention the monsters.

He also noticed the girl. The same one that had broken the demodog's neck with her mind and was taken away by Hopper to 'close the gate'. Name like some kind of number (the brats alternate calling her Jane and El, so he can't tell), and wearing a horrible mix-match of leather jacket and slicked back hair, and old overalls and flannel. She sat to the side, not close to the action but not shut out of it either. She perked up at the mention of monsters, though Steve could not tell if it was interest or caution.

They were at it for another two hours. It was another 20 minutes after that until he was alone in his own car. And he could not get his mind off the damned monsters.

He finds himself at Darmoth. In a few weeks the pumpkin patch will turn itself into a Christmas tree lot, and people will go on pretending that monsters did not emerge from it a few weeks ago. Hargrove keeps telling him to plant his feet, but doesn't he get it? *The earth doesn't stop moving*. He knows what's under there.

He stood there, he's not even sure how long, bat in hand and wishing for a cigarette or something to take the edge off, almost daring for the monsters to show back up again.

Instead, he got the girl.

"Monsters." She said, instead of "hello" or "what the hell are you doing out here in the middle of the night?"

"You're waiting for them too, huh?" He asked, instead of "hello" or

"what the hell are you doing out here in the middle of the night?"

However fucked up he is from all the monster bullshit, she's probably worse. They expected her to be able to close the Gate. They knew they had to help her. Everything was on *her*. And where did she even come from? He would ask, but that would admit he gives a shit about what's going on at the middle school, and that's a bad look even for him.

"Not waiting." She said. "Looking."

She wandered a little bit farther, before she looked back to Steve expectantly.

"Do you have bats?" She asked.

He has more of those bats than he would actually like to admit. He's actually trying to find more ways to hide them in his car. He grabbed one, flips on his sunglasses (it's nearing midnight and the moonlight is nonexistent, but they make him feel more confident), and followed after her.

She focused on the ground as she walks around, foot occasionally tapping the ground for openings. She stopped abruptly, and with a jerk of her head, the earth splits open.

It's not the tunnels of that monster world, like he was expected. It is only a few feet deep, barely up to his hips. There is no blue tint of a sun that provides no warmth or light, nor spores of poison that drift aimlessly in the air. It is just dirt.

He was kind of disappointed, until something leaped out of it.

The first was down before he can even process what it is, as the girl jerks her head and sliced it in half. The other aimed for him, and he swung his bat before he can see what he was aiming for. The skin broke, squirting out some kind of purple goo, and there was a 4 foot tall centipede with no eyes and rows upon rows of teeth impaled on his bat.

"Shit." He swore under his breath.

"It's dead." The girl said.

"I noticed! I wanna know what it is!"

He stopped complaining when he noticed the girl's nosebleed. It was nothing major, but considering they were in a field with dead bloodthirsty monsters, it made him nervous. He went back to his car to grab the bandana he used so many weeks ago, but by the time he got back, she had already wiped away most of it with her sleeve.

"The book. Mike's book." She said. "Maybe it will be in it."

"Don't have it. Never read it." Steve said. "And one of these days, it's not going to be able to tell us about all the monsters."

"That's a Carrion Crawler." Dustin said, firmly, so sure of himself.

Somehow they all managed to meet up before school together the next morning. Even El, or whatever her name is.

"It's a bit small to be a Carrion Crawler." Mike said. "Aren't they supposed to be like 10 feet?"

"Mike, what else is it supposed to be?" Dustin asked.

"Where did you even find it?" Lucas added.

"I did." El said. "I was trying to contact Kali. But I found them. In the Mind Place. I don't know how they got here."

"But didn't you close the Gate?" Lucas asked.

El nodded.

"Then how did they get out again?"

"Well, maybe they got out *before*!" Mike said.

"And we *missed* them?"

"We were a little busy at the minute! Steve had a concussion and none of us knew how to drive!"

"I did *okay*!" Max snapped.

"Then why didn't they run back with all the other demon dogs?" Lucas asked.

"DEMODOGS!" Dustin snapped.

"HEY HEY HEY!" Steve shouted. That got the others to shut up for a few seconds. "Those things didn't last a second against us. They aren't the Demodogs, or whatever. We're stronger than them. And we're gonna beat every last one of them until Hawkins is safe."

There was less fighting after that. They have to get to school eventually, and Steve found himself carpooling all the brats to school. Even El, for some reason. It wasn't like she was going to school (even with a spotless record, which he doubted she had, it would take a while to enroll into a school), and he had no idea where else to drop her off.

"You think there are more out there?" He asked, when it was just the two of them. He didn't want to have this conversation with Will in the car.

El nodded.

"Anything like that big scary one that almost killed all of us?"

El shook her head.

He wanted to scream. Instead, he slammed his hand against the wheel and took a deep breath.

"Well, what are we supposed to do about it?"

El was silent for a minute.

"You have a bat." She offered. "I'll find them. We're stronger than them."

Steve resisted the urge to collapse onto the steering wheel.